

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-10 (canceled).

Claim 11 (currently amended): A retractor comprising:

a shaft including at least one flexible portion;

an a plurality of inflatable bladder bladders disposed on the shaft, at least one of the inflatable bladders being configured to cause a region of the shaft to become more rigid when the at least one inflatable bladder is inflated ~~which is eccentrically mounted on the shaft;~~ and

a cannula having a passage which receives the shaft to deploy the bladder at a target site in tissue.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A retractor as in claim 11, wherein the at least one inflatable bladder is shaped so that it expands into an eccentric shape when inflated by fluid pressure introduced through the shaft.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A retractor as in claim 12, wherein the at least one inflatable bladder does not stretch when fully inflated.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A retractor as in claim 11, wherein the at least one inflatable bladder operates at inflation pressure from 10 mmHg to 1000 mmHg.

Application Serial No. 10/743,125
Response dated March 5, 2007
Reply to Office Action of December 5, 2006

Claim 15 (currently amended): A retractor as in claim 14, wherein the at least one inflatable bladder operates at inflation pressure from 100 mmHg to 1000 mmHg.

Claim 16-19 (canceled).

Claim 20 (New): A retractor as in claim 11, wherein the at least one inflatable bladder is configured to cause the region of the shaft to become rigid.

Claim 21 (New): A retractor as in claim 11, wherein the at least one inflatable bladder causes the region of the shaft to become rigid when the at least one inflatable bladder is inflated.